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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	Hungary	REPORT NO.		50X1
SUBJECT	Flood During Summer 1954	DATE DISTR.	6 December 1955	
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REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

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COUNTRY Hungary

SUBJECT Flood During Summer 1954

DATE DISTR. 28 Oct 1955

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1. In summer 1954, during the flood in Hungary, various factories and offices received a government order to mobilize as many persons as possible to work in the flood-stricken areas. This work was not carried out during regular working hours but, instead, after the regular work day; these persons were transported to the flooded areas to work at night. To refuse to do this "voluntary work", a person was branded as a saboteur; therefore, very few persons refused.
2. Collections of many types were organized and the population "offered" as much as 10 to 20 per cent. of their monthly income. Many persons believed that the Hungarian Government should also do its part by hiring unemployed workers to reinforce dams, etc., because unemployment had increased daily following "rationalization". Some of the "volunteers" were transported to the rural areas to complete the harvesting. Because it was considered unwise to store the harvested grain in the flooded areas, the government took over the cattle and harvested crops of the individual farmers and never returned these to their owners.

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the flood had been primarily caused by lack of maintenance of the dams; most of these dams had not been repaired nor cared for in any way for several years.

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5. The greatest excitement during this period was caused by the financial and medical aid given the Hungarians by the US. For several weeks, the population discussed this aid and compared it to that given by the USSR, which had amounted to only about 1/100th of the aid given by the US. The population was happy to learn that the American aid was controlled by the International Red Cross; because of this they believed that the flood victims would actually receive the assistance intended for them and that the Communist régime would be unable to derive benefits of any kind from the disaster.

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